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California State Senate

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Gov. Gavin Newsom
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

July 16, 2020

Dear Gov. Newsom,

I am writing to ask you to provide your administration's latest data on California's system for tracing the contacts of individuals who test positive for COVID-19.

I share your desire to do everything we possibly can to control this virus, save lives and get California back to work at full strength as quickly as possible.

Your early commitment to training 10,000 contact tracers to augment county efforts was impressive. However, it appears that even that many tracers will not be sufficient to track all the contacts of the rising number of people who are now testing positive. And as you know, without the resources to quickly track and notify those who have been exposed, our ability to control the spread of COVID-19 will be severely compromised.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for assessing the operation of a contact tracing program (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/case-investigation-contact-tracing.pdf>) suggest answering a number of questions to determine if the program is structured properly and performing as needed.

These questions involve the number of cases, the percentage of clients interviewed within 24 hours of a positive test, the percentage of a person's contacts interviewed, the number of cases closed and many more. Please see the attached list of questions and provide answers if the state is tracking those metrics.

In addition, please answer the following questions that are unique to California:

How many contact tracers has the state trained?

How many has each county trained?

Where have the state-trained tracers been deployed?

How many tracers does each county actually have working full-time?

What metrics are the state using to measure whether the level of tracing is sufficient to control the virus?

Which counties are currently meeting those benchmarks?

What questions have the tracers been told to ask each person they contact?

Is the software the state obtained to manage the contact tracing program fully operational? How many counties are using it?

Is the state aggregating and evaluating the data gleaned from the questions asked in any systematic way? If so, what has been learned from that data?

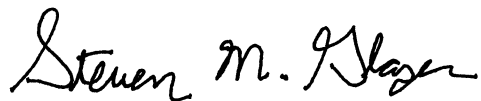
Is this data being shared with the public?

As you may know, the CDC guidelines state that when a jurisdiction does not have the capacity to investigate a majority of its new COVID-19 cases, “case investigation and contact tracing may not be the most effective approach.” Instead, the CDC suggests, jurisdictions “should consider suspending or scaling down contact tracing activities and reimplementing strict mitigation measures (such as stay-at-home orders, business closures, and school closures) until transmission begins to decline.”

In light of this guidance from the CDC, do you believe California is effectively investigating a majority of its new COVID-19 cases?

Thank you for gathering and sharing this information. I stand ready to assist you in any way I can in the fight to protect the health of the people of California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven M. Glazer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Glazer

CC: Anthony Williams, Legislative Secretary

Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency

Dr. Sonia Angell, Director, California Department of Public Health

Sen. Richard Pan, M.D., chair, Senate Health Committee